

# Rhode Island Public Charter Schools: **Renewal Application**

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Office of Charter Schools  
**Rhode Island Department of Education**

## 2013-2014

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## 2013-2014 RENEWAL OVERVIEW

The Board of Regents makes decisions for charter renewal on the recommendation of the Commissioner. Two sources of information will inform the Commissioner's recommendation: a) the Office of Transformation's Performance Review and b) a completed renewal application from the school.

### **A. Office of Transformation Performance Review**

The Office of Transformation conducts a rigorous evaluation of the school's performance based on the three following core questions:

1. Is the school's educational program an academic success?

This section of the overall evaluation is designed to consider all relevant student outcome measures using the most generalizable data available. The results from this portion of the review will be weighted most heavily at renewal time.

2. Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

This section of the evaluation is designed to gauge the quality of instructional leadership, instructional practices, curricula, human resources practices and strategy, family and community engagement, school climate, program evaluation, and mission alignment at each school. Standards for performance in these areas are drawn from the Board of Regent's Basic Education Program Regulations (BEP) and the school's charter.

3. Is the school a viable organization?

This section of the review is designed to ensure that charter schools are able to continue to operate both short and long-term while at least maintaining the quality of their programs. To assess organizational viability, RIDE staff will review each school's financial health, legal/regulatory compliance, and the quality of their implementation of programmatic goals.

### **B. Renewal Application**

Schools will complete a renewal application. RIDE requires charter schools to apply for renewal to fulfill two key purposes: (1) to present any important new or supplemental information pertaining to the above core questions, to enable a more comprehensive assessment of school performance; and (2) to articulate a school's strategies and capacities for sustaining success and continuing to improve over the next charter term.

### **Commissioner's Recommendation**

Information from these two sources will be compiled by Office of Transformation staff and will be presented to the Commissioner. She will offer her recommendations for renewal and discuss them with the Board of Regents at a work session.

## PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

All of the standards and sub-standards provided below are used by Transformation to answer the three core questions.

### **1. IS THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

- 1.1 Is the school making measurable gains in NECAP performance?
- 1.2 Is the school outperforming its students' sending districts as measured by NECAP?
- 1.3 Is the school outperforming demographically similar schools as measured by NECAP?
- 1.4 Is the school's student-level growth percentile higher than the state's median (Elementary and middle school only)?
- 1.5 Are students with Limited English Proficiency making typical growth in English fluency as measured by ACCESS?
- 1.6 Is the school meeting its mission-specific educational goals?
- 1.7 Is the school meeting federally required academic performance targets?

### **2. IS THE SCHOOL PROVIDING THE APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS?**

- 2.1 Does the school's leadership lead the focus on student learning and continuous improvement?
- 2.2 Does the school offer guaranteed and viable curricula?
- 2.3 Has the school implemented a set of coherent, organized instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of all learners?
- 2.4 Does the school recruit, support, and retain highly effective staff?
- 2.5 Does the school engage families and communities?
- 2.6 Does the school provide safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments?
- 2.7 Does the school use information to improve results?
- 2.8 Do all stakeholders share a common understanding of the school's mission?
- 2.9 Is the school meeting its mission-specific appropriate conditions for success performance goals?

### **3. IS THE SCHOOL A VIABLE ORGANIZATION?**

- 3.1 Is the school in sound fiscal health?
- 3.2 Is the school maintaining low rates of chronic absenteeism?
- 3.3 Is there a high level of parent and student satisfaction with the school?
- 3.4 Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?
- 3.5 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to ESL students and students with disabilities?
- 3.6 Is the school meeting state and federal reporting and regulatory compliance obligations?
- 3.7 Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

*The renewal application is not meant to be a redundant exercise.* Accordingly, schools should not use the renewal application to recite data or history already known to RIDE. The extensive evidence already collected allows each school's renewal application to be substantially streamlined. Therefore, renewal applications should focus on providing only new or supplemental information for RIDE, as well as on describing the school's long-term sustainability and plans for ongoing improvement.

The renewal application should be concise and complete, not requiring further explanation or clarification by the school. All necessary documentation should be included as attachments, which should be limited to information that a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence the Office of Transformation has already collected on the school's performance, and/or b) illustrates or supports plans or strategies discussed in the application.

Please adhere to the following guidelines to assemble the application and accompanying materials:

- Each page (including appendices and attachments) should be consecutively numbered;
- All pages must be standard letter size, 8½" X 11" using 12 point, Times New Roman or comparable font, double spaced, one-inch margins.

**Applications will not be returned.** Please keep a copy for your records.

Please submit via email **one (1) electronic version** of your renewal application to [nora.meah@ride.ri.gov](mailto:nora.meah@ride.ri.gov), including all appendices and attachments. Please also submit the original signed cover sheet to RIDE by regular mail.

## COVER SHEET

### CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

Charter School Name:

Contact person name:

Mailing Address:

City/State/Zip:

Email:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

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Head of School

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Date

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Head of School

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Date

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Board Chair

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Date

## **I. Mission**

What is the mission of your school? How has the school realized its mission over the last charter term? Please include specific examples of programs and/or activities that support the mission (e.g., community partnerships, parent programs, after school, and extracurricular activities). (2 pages maximum)

## **II. Sustaining Success and Ongoing Improvement**

Describe your school's plans and strategies for sustaining, improving, and continuing to build academic, organizational, and operational success over the next charter term. Explain how the school will build and achieve long-term improvement, sustainability, and success in:

- i. The governing board
- ii. The leadership team
- iii. Academic achievement for all students
- iv. Any other areas that you wish to discuss

In describing these strategies, specify implementation timelines or timeframes as well as responsible individuals or parties.

Responses in this section must also integrate information regarding the areas of improvement identified by the Office of Transformation Performance Review. The renewal report contains the ratings given to each school for Standards 1, 2, and 3 of the Performance Framework. A school that is currently performing "below typical" in any area of academic performance in Standard 1 and/or that obtained a rating of "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Approaches the Standard" in the standards and sub-standards for 2 and 3, must provide a detailed description of how each rating is being addressed by the school, how progress will continue into the future, the timeline for implementation and monitoring of changes, and responsible individuals or parties.

Responses here should demonstrate that the school has reflected honestly and critically on below standard areas and has identified systematic and cohesive strategies to create improvement. (20 pages maximum, excluding attachments.)

## **III. Additional Information**

Provide any other information that might be pertinent to the Commissioner's recommendation for renewal. Attach any evidence necessary to validate claims you might make. Kindly note that the Commissioner's recommendation and the Board's renewal decision must be based on affirmative evidence regarding the success of a school's educational program, its viability as an organization, and its faithfulness in meeting the terms of its charter. (10 pages maximum, excluding attachments.)

**Note: Page maximums are not meant to be suggested response lengths. Shorter responses are welcome.**